

JANUARY 24, 2005

**SCHAKOWSKY ON U.S. TROOPS IN IRAQ:  
"IT IS TIME FOR OUR SOLDIERS  
TO START THE JOURNEY HOME"**

**CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today released the following statement on U.S. soldiers deployed in Iraq:**

**"The time has come for the United States to withdraw our troops from the battlefield of a war that should never have been waged. There was no real justification for sending our brave young men and women to fight in Iraq, and there is even less reason to keep them there now to die in ever increasing numbers.**

**"Under false pretenses, the Bush Administration took our nation to war against a country that did not pose imminent threat to our security. In Iraq today, over 1,300 U.S. soldiers and an estimated 100,000 civilians are dead. This war is costing an average of \$1.6 billion taxpayer dollars every week, while the mission remains vague, the troops overstretched and under-armored, friendly Iraqis chafe at our presence and unfriendly Iraqis bomb our convoys and enclaves. Neither democracy in Iraq nor security at home has been achieved. Instead, Iraq has become, in a gruesome self-fulfilling prophecy, the ground zero for terrorism that it was not when President Bush chose to invade.**

**"There are those who argue that the U.S. is obligated to 'fix' Iraq now that we have broken it. Unfortunately, the Administration has left us with no good options whatsoever. The worst choice, however, would be to continue to do more of the same, and watch the body count grow. It is clear that for stability to replace chaos, a political and not a military resolution is required.**

**"A political process has begun, admittedly fragile, and it is time for the United States to leave. Once the January 30 elections are concluded, the new Iraqi government takes responsibility for forging its own path toward stability and democracy. The U.S. should provide financial and material assistance for that effort and encourage the international community to help.**

**"The results may not be what the President envisioned or anyone wanted. Some**

experts warn of civil war. Many worry for the Christian community and for the women. These are very real concerns that, sadly, weren't even considered when the U.S. invaded, and even after 'mission accomplished' was declared by President Bush. We should do what we can diplomatically to address vulnerable populations, yet, as long as U.S. forces are on the ground, a lasting peace and stable Iraq cannot be achieved. All of us care deeply about our brave soldiers who are doing the very best they can under near impossible conditions. It is time to bring them home."